

CREATIVE TIMES

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June 2008



MAY 15, 2008

WHITEY HAS RETURNED!

In 2007 a partial albino nested at CUE and to my surprise he survived and returned to the exact same gourd he used last year!

WHITEY'S STORY

Whitey came to be with us in the Spring of 2007. When we first met Whitey we were so fascinated with him we decided that if he could attract a female we wanted to record his family life, so off to Sams Club I went where I purchased a DVD recorder. We connected the recorder to a nest cam. I quickly became hooked, and a nest camaholic was born! He quickly paired with a SY female and shortly thereafter 5 eggs were laid. We watched as the female sat diligently on her eggs, and sat, and sat till it was way past hatching time. I called my friend Andy Troyer and talked it over with him. I knew that a successful nesting would increase our chances that he would return the

following year. After speaking with Andy I checked my nest records and found a nest of 5 that had 2 day old young to a sub adult pair. We removed one nestling and placed it in Whitey's gourd. We also removed one egg. When the SY female returned to the nest she was mildly surprised but instinct took over and she brooded the nestling. Whitey immediately went to work gathering small morsels of food for his new adoptive nestling. We watched and recorded the entire growth of the nestling and watched as Whitey performed his fatherly duties with so much pride. What will 2008 bring? Well he has a ASY female, and nest building is underway, only time will tell!

OFFICE HOURS
M-F 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
814-833-7896

Helpful Tips

Ground Stakes

Extending the Life

Your steel ground stake when properly cared for can last a lifetime. Here's how. The weakest spot on your ground stake is where the stake extends above the cement. Water can pool at the base of stake. Place a small amount of oil (engine) around the base of the stake. It will wick into and up the ground stake and pole. This should be done once a year. If you remove your pole at the end of the season take grease (the kind in a tube) and using a spreading instrument smear your entire ground stake with grease. This will shed the water and help your pole slide smoothly over the stake. If you live in the northern states and remove your pole for winter storage take a piece of duck tape and cover the top of the ground stake to keep water from getting inside your stake. The freezing and thawing could damage your stake. Remove the duck tape before reinstalling the pole.



WHAT'S HOT! CHECK THESE ITEMS OUT!

Universal Sparrow Trap



Fits inside a variety of houses including the Watersedge, Trio, or any compartment that is at least 5-1/4" high x 4-3/4" wide x 4-3/4" deep with the entrance hole aligned at 2-3/8". Our UST features an aluminum front with a highly visible powder coated door, and a vinyl coated wire body.

UST **\$12.95**

Aluminum Gourd Post

Tree Swallows annoying your martins? Try providing their own post, attach your own provided gourd and enjoy the action! This 2 piece all aluminum post assembles in seconds, push into ground and your ready to go.



AGP **\$19.95**



Perching Arms

Perching Arms have been used under aluminum housing, on telescoping poles or stand alone on your own provided pole. Fits round poles from 1-1/4" OD to 2-3/8" OD. Gourds can also be hung from Perch Arms for an economical rack.

PA1 One set of 3 arms **\$22.95**

PA3 Three sets **\$56.85**

Personal Pan Feeder



Very handy trays mount easily to the side of any wooden house or replaces arm

on your deluxe style gourd rack. Completely assembled.

PPF **\$11.95**

Community News

Conservation Award

Creative Universe would like to congratulate John Miller who submitted an entry on behalf of Cahokia Mounds Historical Site. The park received a Premium Gourd Rack, installed it, and now has martins! Congratulations to John and Cahokia Mounds!

Upcoming Events

Martifest June 20-21

11th Annual Martifest

at the Voctor Stoll farm outside Finger, Tennessee
Vendors Day is Friday, June 20th
Traditional Martifest program is Saturday, June 21
Speakers, awards, great meal, door prizes and raffle winners
Entrance fee \$5.00 on June 20
\$10.00 on June 21 or \$10.00 for both days / per person. CUE has donated a Multi-Purpose Pole to help defray the cost of this great festival.

MN Martifest June 28

6th ANNUAL Minnesota Martifest 2008

Hosts: Paul & Carrie Wolf
Location: 5095 173rd Street North
Hugo, MN 55038
Time: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Saturday, June 28, 2008.
CUE has donated a Starter Rack to this great festival.

Purple Martin Universe FORUM

Did you know CUE has our own forum? We are a small community of fellow landlords; beginner to experienced. While we place emphasis on CUE products with question and comments and ideas we also have lots of fun. We would love for you to come and join us. Our site is password protected which means you must join, but it is real easy. Click here to learn how.

2009 Catalog

New Catalog for 2009!

Creative Universes' 2009 catalog will be filled with many new products and bright ideas. And I would like YOU to participate in the fun! How? It's simple. I'd love to use your photographs of martins using Creative Universe products. Whether its photos of the gourd racks or a photo of a captured starling in a UST, all photos will be considered. I am also looking for photos of ASY male and female and SY male and female. Any one who would like to submit a photo should email the photo to cue@hughes.net and title the photo, 2009 catalog. All photos will be properly credited. Thanks!

Natural Gourds, easy to do!

I love natural gourds and so do my martins! Natural gourds need some prep work, but its not that hard. You will need your gourd, a four inch hole saw, a two inch hole saw OR a tunnel entrance like those from Entrances by Sandy, or a Troyer Tunnel, caulk; I used liquid nails, access port, and a quality white paint.

Let me begin by saying that cleaning gourds is a dirty, messy job. The following has worked for me: I hose down the gourd, as wet as I can, and use a paint scraper to remove the mold and dirt from the gourd, I am not looking for a masterpiece just remove the worse of the dirt. Set the gourd in the sun to dry.

Next I examine my gourd. I look at the gourds possibilities. Could it be a natural horizontal gourd, or a woodpecker gourd, or the traditional vertical style gourd. Next I determine the type of entrance I want to place on the gourd. Do I want a standard round hole, or do I want to place a tunnel entrance on? Where should the access port be placed? Once I have made all these decisions, (and believe me I give it no great thought;) I begin by using

my 4 inch hole saw and drill the access port. I like to place the port upwards of gourd that way when I look inside, I am looking downward into the gourd. Don't forget to clean the gourd out. Then depending on the entrance I have chosen will determine the size hole needed for the entrance. If I place a round hole or for that matter a crescent hole in the gourd I always place a canopy above the entrance. (You can purchase canopies from CUE 12 pack for \$9.48). Once all the holes are in place I caulk the access port and if using a tunnel, I would caulk that in and don't forget to caulk your canopy on too. I make a production line. I would drill all of the access ports, then entrances. I would then follow it up by doing all my caulking. Set your gourds aside to allow the caulk to set. Last I paint them. I put on 2 coats of Lowes American Traditional High Gloss Enamel. I love the paint and it hides any left over imperfections left behind by my gourd cleaning. Last thing I do is drill the hanging holes and don't forget to drill a series of drainage holes for the bottom of the gourd. Hang, and watch the martins raise their families.



Every issue I will feature a tool that I just cant live without! These handy little helpers may be something you have never run across but if you decide to purchase one, you will wonder how you ever got along with out it!

What's in your tool box?

Dental Mirror and Tape Recorder.

Nest checks can be a hassle but these 2 little tools can help you get done quickly. I use the dental mirror to gently move leaves around or use the mirror part to see into the back of nest. The tape recorder is small enough to fit in my pocket. I simply push record, and start looking into the gourds and record my findings. The first nest check I do general covers all aspects. I may say natural gourd, round hole, # 12, nest green leaves. Then I can sit inside with a cool glass of ice tea and transcribe my verbal notes. I purchased the recorder at Sams Club and the dental mirror thru Miles Kimbal. Two tools that can help you make quick work of nest checks.



Ponder this...

Supplemental feeding is so important. Here in Pennsylvania, Mother Nature subjected us to two weeks of cold wet weather. Day after day I watched the martins, looking up at the sky, wondering where the sun was. During these stressful times its important that your martins will eat supplemental food. Supplemental food can be in the form of crickets, mealworms even scrambled egg.

After 3 days of no food martins will generally become lethargic and depending on the condition they are in before the cold snap arrives will probably perish by the seventh day of no food.

During the 2 week stretch I experienced in May, we fed over 14,000 crickets and dozens upon dozens of eggs. I found 6 martins on

the ground who were unable or unwilling to attempt to feed. Three of these martins I was able to rehabilitate, fed them for a few days to build their strength up and released them, 3 of them perished. Its a sad feeling when you lose a martin, for any reason. The old saying, you can leads a horse to water but can't make them drink comes to mind. I can feed these martins all the food they want but I can't make them swallow it.

When feeding crickets I start by placing a cricket on a plastic spoon, pull the head of the spoon back and let the cricket fly. I like to shoot the crickets straight up, never aim for a martin. Once the martins learn to accept supplemental food, you can place the food on a platform feeder like a Bed and Breakfast (B&B \$89.95)

I especially like the feeder trays as there is less flying on the martins part, meaning less over all stress. Plus the martin can eat its fill.

Remember, no matter how hard you try you wont be able to save every martin. But with supplemental feeding you will save the majority of them.

Now that it's warmed up (its 90 degrees as I write this) the SY's have arrived and a new breeding cycle will begin. I pray that the weather will hold and the martins and young will have a stress free season. If not, I am prepared, I have crickets in the freezer and eggs in the fridge.



2008 CUE RESEARCH SITE AND TESTING FACILITY STATS & PHOTOS



Nest Check 6/8/08

Total number of compartments offered: 232

Number of nests with eggs: 55

Total number of eggs laid: 207

Number of nest with young: 2

Number of nests with green leaves: 47

